

Hollywood Park Poems

# hollywood park poems

by doug tanoury



FUNKY DOG PUBLISHING



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DETROIT, MICHIGAN USA



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*The titles for many of the poems in this collection were taken from the names of horses found in racing schedules and results at Hollywood Park as well as other well-known tracks. No horses were hurt, injured or in any way exploited in the preparation of this book.*

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## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Autumn Inside Me**

I pick a pear from a branch  
Hanging low  
And take a small bite  
Just to test the taste  
It is sweet  
So the second  
And all subsequent bites  
Are larger

It is cool after sunset  
I no longer walk  
Barefoot on the blacktop  
In comfort  
It is a marble floor  
Against my soles

I eat the pear  
Seeds and all  
And only the stem is left  
To twirl between thumb  
And forefinger  
As I wish  
I had plucked two  
From the tree  
With branches  
Hanging so low

I walk in darkness  
Just after sunset  
Without  
A remnant of light  
On the horizon  
Black  
Is the color  
Of fall nights

I have tasted the season  
On my lips  
Across my tongue  
And there is no doubt  
It is autumn  
Inside me

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Awake Erato**

"Awake Erato"

I whisper in urgent prayer  
As we play master and slave  
To senses that blend together  
In this moment so finely  
I can smell her movements  
Taste fragrance  
Hear texture  
Touch her words  
And see her thoughts

In passionate confusion  
The hand is quicker than the eye  
And mechanisms that trigger illusions  
Is the obvious as  
I am transformed into  
Animal  
Vegetable  
Mineral  
Reduced to the basic  
And most elemental parts  
In a universe of limbs  
That is ever expanding

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Bellesonnette**

The sound of dry leaves  
Scattered by the wind  
Across the pavement,  
Sound like footsteps.

Crows in the highest branches  
Of a leafless Aspen  
Call out, announcing  
A November night.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### \_\_\_\_\_ **Winter Birds** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ flocksofbirdsperchonutilitywireshighoverhead\_\_\_\_\_ against\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ winterskystucktothewires\_\_\_\_\_ frozen\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ stillandunmovingtheirheadstuckedagainsttheir\_\_\_\_\_ breasts\_

\_\_\_\_\_ like\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ linesoffreeverse\_\_\_\_\_

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Blossom Bound**

The buds in the vase  
Sitting on the kitchen table  
Have opened today,

And we debate the color  
Of roses in half bloom.  
I say lavender.

She says periwinkle.  
I say the color of lilacs.  
She says an iris hue.

I say lavender like woman's hat  
At a Solemn High Easter Mass.  
She says the periwinkle of her scarf.



## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Six Brass Buttons**

I remember his uniform  
In my bedroom closet as a boy.  
The jacket's sleeves lit up  
With Sergeant Major stripes.  
Its weight slowly bending  
The wire hanger.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Cedarwood Spirit**

In the chest at the foot of the bed,  
Where the flannel sheets  
And winter quilts are kept in summer,  
I find the crocheted tablecloth  
She made and the crystal candelabra  
From her dining room and I miss her,  
Regretting it's been so long  
Since I've looked in this chest.

**Daiquiri Blue Moon**

I often sit in the yard  
On summer nights, on  
A wooden sun chair that  
I built from scrap.

I think about the things  
In the past that brought  
Me here, the events that  
Shaped this moment, the  
Things I did or did not.

I can count the turning points,  
And say if not that, not this,  
But I'm not so sure of water-  
Sheds, for I mistrust them.

It's little insignificant  
Moments that grow and  
Build in importance like  
The eyes of a man and woman  
That meet quite by accident.

**Direct Investment**

I give her new bills  
Brightly green like the  
First leaves of Spring  
Folded small and tight  
Like the wings of a katydid  
An arm of a mantis  
To kiss her cheek  
I draw her close  
In tender embrace

**Echostalkingwillow**

I remember a willow  
In my yard as a child  
Its branches weeping  
Way to the ground,  
And me hiding in them,  
Wondering what could  
Cause a tree to cry.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### Histories

I watched her light a candle  
And move in the weak light  
From a bygone age

The flame so fragile  
It leans and sways in air's  
Faintest motions

My burning love is a lamp  
From antiquity a pre-industrial  
Handcrafted artifact

An oil lamp of glass from Rome  
Bronze from Carthage  
A terra cotta from Athens

She smiles at me in a flicker  
Of light and knows all my past  
Like a life from Plutarch

A chronicle from Tacitus  
An Annals from Leviticus a history  
From Herodotus

And me ignorant knowing nothing  
Of her can only quote Ovid, Cattulus,  
Hesiod and Gilgamesh

Lying in darkness with her  
On Spring nights everything learned  
Is forgotten

And yesterdays are so many  
Shadows cast in the glow  
Of the lamplight of love

**Lucky Souvenir**

On a belt loop of my blue jeans  
I'd wear a neon green rabbit's foot  
Hanging on a golden chain  
As a boy, and I believed that it  
Made mysterious karmic allowance  
and magically adjusted providence.  
It kept me from trouble in school,  
Helped in fights walking home and  
Made fourth grade girls smile.  
So much for a boy depends  
On totems and tokens and  
A green rabbit's foot.

**Manhattan Night**

The Manhattan skyline rises  
With gun-barrel grayness  
Above hard streets of dull  
Pavement and sidewalk where  
Glittering crystalline sparkles  
Speckle the concrete surface

On a summer night it wears  
Blue neon like a sequin dress  
And walks slowly on porcelain legs  
That balance in stiletto heels and  
Carry a form without softness  
Through the cold white moonlight



## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Grand Marais**

There is a limestone pier  
That stretches into blue  
Waves on Lake Superior

Where I cast a spoon into  
Water glowing translucent green  
Like sunlight through a leaf

And watch a lone fishing boat  
Surrounded by circling gulls  
That cry a plaintive call

Make its way from the blue waves  
Toward the calm green water  
Behind the seawall of the harbor

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Mime Artist**

There is a part of me  
That cannot speak,  
That feels things  
I cannot express in words,  
But only in exaggerated gesture,  
White-faced makeup,  
Painted lips and stylized eyes.  
I often bite my lips,  
Stomp my feet in anger,  
Because I can't convey  
The message of what I want,  
What I really need and so I  
Continue to grope an invisible wall  
For an opening that can't  
Be seen but only felt.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Miriam's Song**

As she washes dishes  
I heard her singing  
Softly to herself

I listen out of site  
Octave and pitch  
Beyond my grasp

And I am touched  
By pureness of sound  
Of lyrics sung

Above the tap water  
At the kitchen window  
Her voice floats

On the ring of crystal  
The clink of china  
A simple melody

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Mistress Quickly**

I watch her preparing dinner  
Or setting the table, a white apron  
Girdling her thighs, talking softly  
To herself as she drops ice cubes  
Into glasses, unaware that I am  
Nearby listening.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Mr. Lucky**

I've lived simply  
All these years,  
*"Builds character"*  
I'd said,  
But now I'm worried.  
I hear good fortune  
Breaking down  
My door.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Nightjar**

In darkness before sunrise  
Tail lights of cars form a line  
Winking into the horizon,

Reminding me of red glass jars  
Holding rows of small votive candles  
In the darkest corners of a church.

In a black cassock morning,  
Church silence is broken by a truck  
Passing at high speed on the interstate.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Night Touch**

Evenings are cold but clear.  
Stars and moon light the sky.  
The Belt of Orion shines above  
My neighbor's house, the Laotian,  
Whose wife knows so little English.  
I wish I knew the name of just one star.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **On Her Own**

No children,  
No man,  
Only herself  
To care for.  
Her comings  
And goings  
Her own  
Choices.  
When I see her  
In a doorway,  
I always wonder:  
*Coming?*  
*Going?*



**Radio Flyer**

The paint on the wagon  
In the garage has faded  
And it's now more pink  
Than red  
Rust forms a halo  
Around each bolt's head and  
The axle squeals as the  
Wheels turn.  
The children have grown  
And haven't played with it  
In many years, but I  
Still keep it,  
Always making  
Room for it  
When I clean the garage  
Each spring and fall.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Rising**

The nimbus of sunrise  
Reflected in architectural glass

Articulated in panes  
Growing large and more golden

Across the street  
The financial center holds in each

Window a piece of sky  
Like a mosaic in a Byzantine tomb

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Second Hand**

The second hand  
Thrift store smells of  
Mildews and molds and  
Dreams

So hard they crumble  
Like an old cookie  
When touched a single  
Wooden

Shoe from Holland  
Wobbles on a shelf  
Next to china cups and  
A brown

Glass decanter that once  
Held coffee liqueur  
Now holds only used  
Wishes

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Fields Of Silk**

Her bed of love's pink touches  
Were dreams are born,  
Fantasies made flesh,  
A place of soft laughter,  
Peaceful darkness.

## Hollywood Park Poems

### **Sky Blue**

Wisps of impressionist clouds range  
Across a landscape of fields with trees  
In a

Sky Monet would paint for he did  
Clouds as Degas did dancers in scenes  
Dominated by

Summer skies that foil and accent the  
Intrusion of poplar and cypress in  
Full foliage

Into a brilliance of blue silk unsoiled  
And still except for the slow trembling  
Of leaves

**Suffixes in Line**

Her ethereal presence  
Standing next to me  
Lightness  
Against my heaviness  
Slenderness  
Beside my mass  
Fairness  
Next to my darkening

I know that winds  
Passes through form  
Like breezes through lace curtains and  
Sunlight shines through flesh  
As through the sheerest gauze  
Of fabric

And she stands with  
Fluidness  
Against my solidness  
Softness  
Aside my hardening

A calm landscape  
Under a dark blue sky  
A sparrow flying in the winds  
Before a storm  
Under low and heavy clouds  
The *ness* of her  
Against the *ing* of me

**Our Three Wishes**

It was simple once.  
I used to practice wishing,  
Rehearsing wishes  
Confident of each one,  
Certain of all three,  
But now  
It's grown complicated.  
I'm not so certain and  
Old desires no longer  
Hold power over me.  
I now understand  
The danger of  
One wish granted.

**Time Fire**

Yesterday's ablaze,  
Flames licking  
Across today  
And smoke  
Obscures tomorrow.  
Soon everything  
I have known,  
Will know,  
Now know,  
Will be consumed,  
All transformed to ash  
Except not this,  
Not these,  
Not them.



### **My Vision**

In my vision of the future I have shed denial  
And offer no more explanations with open palms  
No more accountings and questions and the voice  
Of suspicion and interrogation are no longer  
Whispered in a dreamer's ear for I am reborn

In new freedom I am acquitted of crimes  
Imagined where I sneak off to fornicate  
Before dinner and each shopping trip becomes  
Torrid interlude with strange women whose breasts  
Taste like salt and smell of sweat

Confronted with fantasy facts and the dark  
Physics of a world imagined a shadow me  
Lives alternate lives never enjoyed and  
Grows weary in a universe of infinite lies  
Where the laws of science are too complex to grasp

With relationships the fabrics of which are  
Confusing and enigmatic to a reasonable man  
So let me be undisturbed and unbothered  
And escape the duplicity and the onus  
Of innumerable oaths and overlooked proofs

To awaken now enlightened to the point  
Where I can drive all night in August moonlight  
And smoke unfiltered cigarettes in a chili-pepper-red  
Convertible where the tachometer ticks off RPM's  
And the odometer runs backwards

**World on a String**

She leans her head  
And talks as if she knows me  
And I listen  
Long and silent  
Like an old friend

Child of delicate grace  
Fingers and hands  
Move as if working invisible  
Strings of a marionette  
As she talks

My eyes are drawn  
To the lazy motions of her  
Hands that float slow  
And gesture grows  
Toward ritual dance

An onyx ring she wears  
Is a cut and polished  
Piece of a winter night  
Set against virgin silkiness  
That is the whiteness of her skin

**Lady Zappiano**

She wears a white apron  
In the kitchen and bakes  
Italian cookies on Sunday afternoons  
And smokes unfiltered cigarettes

On winter evenings  
She simmers sauces and boils pasta  
And sprinkles spices from  
An open palm

She undresses slowly  
In the yellow glow  
Of a Pieta nightlight and lays in a bed  
That smells of garlic and onion

## Hollywood Park Poems

### About Doug Tanoury



Doug Tanoury is primarily a poet of the Internet with the majority of his work never leaving electronic form. His verse can be read at electronic magazines and journals across the world. Collections of poetry by Doug Tanoury can be found at Funky Dog Publishing <http://www.funkydogpublishing.com> and Athens Avenue <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/dtanoury1/Athens/index.htm>

This and other ebook collections of poetry by Doug Tanoury can be read and downloaded at: <http://home.comcast.net/~dtanoury1/Tanoury.html>

Doug grew up in Detroit, Michigan and still lives in the area.

Doug Tanoury credits his 7th grade poetry anthology from Sister Debra's English class, *Reflections On A Gift Of Watermelon Pickle And Other Modern Verse*, (Stephen Dunning, Edward Lueders and Hugh Smith, (c) 1966 by Scott Foresman & Company) as exerting the greatest influence on his work. He still keeps a copy of it at his writing desk.